

Housing Comprehensive Plan Task Force

Meeting Summary October 18, 2006

Task Force members present: Jim Bellus (Chair), Jim Carlson-Otero (Jesse Gomez), John Couchman, Jim Erchul, Beverley Hawkins, Alicia Huckleby (Jon Gutzmann), Shawn Huckleby, Susan McCall, Glen McCluskey, Marjorie Mangine, Margy Mattlin, Harry Melander, Gaius Nelson, Paul Rebholz, Jim Solem, Missy Thompson, Mary Tingerthal, Maureen Warren, Linda White

Members absent: Ilean Her (excused), Marilyn Porter (excused), Ellen Watters

Staff: Joe Collins, Gary Peltier, Luis Pereira, Yang Zhang

Guests: Jim Anderson, John Buzza, Bob Cudahy

Chair Bellus opened the meeting with introductions. He gave an overview to the Task Force process. The Task Force will be advisory to the Planning Commission, the Mayor, and the City Council. It consists of housing professionals and representatives of district councils. The Task Force discusses housing-related topics and gives ideas to frame the issues. The Task Force would meet from October 2006 to June 2007 (no meeting in December), and reconvene from October to December 2007 to review and approve the draft plan.

In addition to the Task Force meetings, there will be three to four community comment meetings throughout the process. These provide opportunities for the broader public to give input.

The Comprehensive Plan will guide the City's policies and development in the decade following its adoption. Staff is currently working on five chapters of the Comprehensive Plan, including housing, land use, transportation, parks and recreation, and water. The plan is due for submission to the Met Council by December 2008.

The following existing plans were discussed (please see handout and binder for details):

- 1998 Comprehensive Plan
- Annual Housing Action Plan
- HUD Consolidated Plan
- Plan to End Homelessness
- A Lens for the Future
- Scoping Report for the Comprehensive Plan

City Staff also briefly introduced the following housing policies that have been important during the past few years:

- Affordable housing
- Economic integration
- Locational choice
- Vendor outreach and affirmative action programs
- Efforts against predatory lending
- Sustainable, green, and energy-efficient development
- Visitability

Jim Anderson from Ramsey County Human Services was the guest speaker. He spoke on homeless and supportive housing in Ramsey County. On any given night, 1,600 people in Ramsey County are homeless, of whom 34% are adult men, 28% are adult women, 33% are children with one or both parents, and 5% are unaccompanied youth. In 2005, 4,543 individuals used emergency shelters in Ramsey County, an 8% increase since 2003. Currently, there are 531 beds in homeless and domestic violence shelters, 441 units of transitional housing, and 582 units of permanent supportive housing in Ramsey County. The cause of homelessness is complicated, including poverty, lack of affordable housing, physical or learning disability/mental illnesses, the loss or incapacity of personal support network, and others. Only 1 in 10 households in poverty becomes homeless. The problem of homelessness comes with a high price tag for the government, as the homeless population is more likely to use medical care and emergency services.

The Ramsey County Plan to End Homelessness spelled out the goal of producing 920 units of new permanent supportive housing, and creating 600 new housing vouchers, including 100 vouchers earmarked for youth under 21. The plan also included a number of other recommendations to end long-term homelessness and prevent homelessness from occurring in vulnerable populations.

Task Force members discussed the importance of economic development, density and design, sustainability and green-building technology, and the link between housing, transportation, and land use. They recognized the need for the Housing Chapter to coordinate with the Land Use and Transportation chapters.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Next meeting: 4 to 6 p.m., Wednesday, November 15, 2006, at Hamline-Midway Library, 1558 Minnehaha Avenue W.